

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:
a plurality of network ports;
a central processing unit (CPU) interface; and
a controller to

send, to the CPU interface, a request to approve an association between one of the plurality of network ports and a source media access control (MAC) address of a packet received on the one of the plurality of network ports when no request to approve the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address has been sent to the CPU interface, and

send, to the CPU interface, the request ~~to approve the association between the one of the network ports and the source MAC address~~ when an approval for an association between the source MAC address and a different one of the plurality of network ports has been received from the CPU interface.

2. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the controller ~~is further to determine~~further determines whether an association exists between ~~any of the~~one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address.

3. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 2, further comprising[[:]] a memory to store a forwarding database;~~and,~~

wherein the controller searches a forwarding database for the source MAC address to determine~~when determining~~ whether an association exists between ~~any of the~~one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address,~~the controller is further to search a forwarding database for the source MAC address.~~

4. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the controller ~~is further to determine~~further determines whether no request to approve the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address has been sent to the CPU interface.

5. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 4, wherein the controller further determines whether an unapproved association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address exists, ~~to determine when determining~~ whether no request to approve the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address has been sent to the CPU interface, ~~the controller is further to determine whether an unapproved association between the one of the network ports and the source MAC address exists.~~

6. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 5, wherein the controller determines whether the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address exists, ~~to determine when determining~~ whether the unapproved association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address exists, ~~the controller is further to determine whether the association between the one of the network ports and the source MAC address exists,~~ and

wherein the controller determines whether the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address is approved when the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address exists, ~~to determine whether the association between the one of the network ports and the source MAC address is approved.~~

7. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 6, further comprising[[:]] a memory to store a forwarding database, ~~and,~~

wherein the controller further searches the forwarding database for an entry comprising the source MAC address when determining, ~~to determine~~ whether the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address exists, ~~the controller is further to search the forwarding database for an entry comprising the source MAC address.~~

8. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 7, wherein the controller further determines whether an approval flag is set for the entry comprising the source MAC address when determining, ~~to determine~~ whether the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address is approved, ~~the controller is further to determine whether an approval flag is set for the entry comprising the source MAC address.~~

9. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the controller ~~is further to create~~ further creates an unapproved association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address.

10. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein when creating, ~~to create~~ the unapproved association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address, ~~the controller is further:~~

~~to create~~ creates the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address; and

~~to mark~~ indicates that the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address as unapproved.

11. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 10, further comprising[[:]] a memory to store a forwarding database, and,

wherein the controller further creates an entry in the forwarding database when , ~~to create~~ creating the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address ~~comprises, and the controller is further to create an entry in the forwarding database,~~

wherein the entry ~~identifying~~ identifies the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address.

12. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the controller further sets an approval flag in the forwarding database for the entry, ~~to mark~~ when indicating that the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address as unapproved, ~~the controller is further to set an approval flag in the forwarding database for the entry.~~

13. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the controller [[is]] further:

~~to—receiver~~receives, from the CPU interface, in response to the request to approve the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address, an approval of the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address; and

~~to—clear~~clears the approval flag for the entry.

14. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the controller ~~[[is]]~~ further:

~~to—receiver~~receives, from the CPU interface, in response to the request to approve the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address, a disapproval of the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address; and

~~to—delete~~deletes the entry.

15. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the controller ~~[[is]]~~ further:

~~to—receiver~~receives, from the CPU interface, in response to the request to approve the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address, an approval of the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address; and

~~to approve~~approves the unapproved association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address.

16. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the controller ~~[[is]]~~ further:

~~to receiving~~receives, from the CPU interface, in response to the request to approve the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address, a disapproval of the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address; and

~~to delete~~deletes the unapproved association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address.

17. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the packet further comprises a destination MAC address, and

wherein the controller ~~[[is]]~~ further:

~~to process~~processes the packet according to the destination MAC address when an association between the destination MAC address and a further one of the plurality of network ports exists and the association between the destination MAC address and the further one of the plurality of network ports has been approved; ~~[[and]]~~

~~to process~~processes the packet without regard to the destination MAC address when no association between the destination MAC address and ~~any of the~~one of the plurality of network ports exists; and

~~to process~~processes the packet without regard to the destination MAC address when the association between the destination MAC address and the further one of the plurality of network ports exists but the association between the destination MAC address and the further one of the plurality of network ports has not been approved.

18. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 17, wherein the controller further causes the further one of the plurality of network ports to transmit the packet, ~~to process~~ when processing the packet according to the destination MAC address, ~~the controller is further to cause the further one of the network ports to transmit the packet.~~

19. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 17, wherein the controller further causes all of the plurality of network ports but the one of the plurality of network ports to transmit the packet to processwhen processing the packet without regard to the destination MAC address, ~~the controller is further to cause all of the network ports but the one of the network ports to transmit the packet.~~

20. (Original) An integrated circuit comprising the apparatus of claim 1.

21. (Original) A network switch comprising the apparatus of claim 1.

22. (Original) The network switch of claim 21, wherein the network switch is an Ethernet network switch.

23. (Currently Amended) The network switch of claim 21, further comprising[[:]] a CPU ~~in communication~~that communicates with the CPU interface.

24. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:
a plurality of network ~~port means~~ports;

central processing unit (CPU) interface means for communicating with a CPU; and

controller means for sending, to the CPU interface means, a request to approve an association between one of the plurality of network port meansports and a source media access control (MAC) address of a packet received on the one of the network ~~port means~~ports when no request to approve the association between the one of the plurality of network port meansports and the source MAC address has been sent to the CPU interface means, [[and]]

wherein the controller means sendingsends, to the CPU interface means, the request ~~to approve the association between the one of the network port means and the source MAC address~~ when an approval for an association between the source MAC address and a different one of the plurality of network port meansports has been received from the CPU interface means.

25. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 24, wherein the controller means ~~is further for determining~~determines whether an association exists between ~~any of the network port means~~one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address.

26. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 25, further comprising memory means for storing a forwarding database;~~and,~~

wherein,~~for~~ the controller means searches a forwarding database for the source MAC address when determining whether an association exists between any of the network port meansone of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address,~~the controller means is further for searching a forwarding database for the source MAC address.~~

27. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 24, wherein the controller means ~~is further for determining~~determines whether no request to approve the association between the one of the plurality of network port meansports and the source MAC address has been sent to the CPU interface means.

28. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 27, wherein, ~~for~~ the controller means determines whether an unapproved association between the one of the network ports and the source MAC address exists when determining whether no request to approve the association between the one of the plurality of network port meansports and the source MAC address has been sent to the CPU interface means, ~~the controller means is further for determining whether an unapproved association between the one of the network port means and the source MAC address exists.~~

29. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 28, wherein, ~~for~~ when determining whether the unapproved association between the one of the plurality of network port meansports and the source MAC address exists, the controller means ~~is further for:~~

~~determining~~ determines whether the association between the one of the plurality of network port meansports and the source MAC address exists; and

~~when the association between the one of the network port means and the source MAC address exists, determining~~
determines whether the association between the one of the plurality of network port meansports and the source MAC address is approved when the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address exists.

30. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 29, further comprising[[:]] memory means for storing a forwarding database;~~and,~~

wherein,~~for~~ when determining whether the association between the one of the plurality of network port meansports and the source MAC address exists, the controller means ~~is further for searching~~searches the forwarding database for an entry comprising the source MAC address.

31. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 30, wherein,~~for~~ when determining whether the association between the one of the plurality of network port meansports and the source MAC address is approved, the controller means ~~is further for determining~~determines whether an approval flag is set for the entry comprising the source MAC address.

32. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 24, wherein the controller means ~~is further for creating~~creates an unapproved association between the one of the plurality of network ~~port~~ ports and the source MAC address.

33. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 32, wherein, ~~for~~ when creating the unapproved association between the one of the plurality of network ~~port~~ meansports and the source MAC address, the controller means ~~is further for~~:

~~creating~~ creates the association between the one of the plurality of network ~~port~~ meansports and the source MAC address; and

~~marking~~ indicates the association between the one of the plurality of network ~~port~~ meansports and the source MAC address as unapproved.

34. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 33, further comprising ~~memory~~ memory means for storing a forwarding database; ~~and,~~

wherein,~~for~~ when creating the association between the one of the plurality of network port meansports and the source MAC address~~comprises~~, the controller means ~~is further for~~ creatingcreates an entry in the forwarding database,~~the entry identifying that identifies~~ the one of the plurality of network port meansports and the source MAC address.

35. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 34, wherein,~~for marking~~ the controller means sets an approval flag in the forwarding database for the entry when indicating the association between the one of the plurality of network port meansports and the source MAC address as unapproved,~~the controller means is further for setting an approval flag in the forwarding database for the entry.~~

36. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 35, wherein the controller means~~is further for~~:

~~receiving,~~ receives from the CPU interface means[[,]] an approval of the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address in response to the request to approve the association between the one of the plurality of network port meansports and the source MAC address,~~an approval of the association between the one of the network port means and the source MAC address; and~~

~~clearing~~ clears the approval flag for the entry.

37. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 35, wherein the controller means ~~is further for~~:

~~receiving,~~ receives from the CPU interface means ~~[[,]]~~ a disapproval of the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address in response to the request to approve the association between the one of the plurality of network port means ports and the source MAC address, ~~a disapproval of the association between the one of the network port means and the source MAC address; and~~

~~deleting~~ deletes the entry.

38. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 32, wherein the controller means ~~is further for~~:

~~receiving,~~ receives from the CPU interface means ~~[[,]]~~ an approval of the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address in response to the request to approve the association between the one of the plurality of network port means ports and the source MAC address, ~~an approval of the association between the one of the network port means and the source MAC address; and~~

~~approving~~ approves the unapproved association between the one of the plurality of network port meansports and the source MAC address.

39. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 32, wherein the controller means ~~is further for~~:

~~receiving~~, receives from the CPU interface means [[,]] a disapproval of the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address in response to the request to approve the association between the one of the plurality of network port meansports and the source MAC address, ~~a disapproval of the association between the one of the network port means and the source MAC address~~; and

~~deleting~~ deletes the unapproved association between the one of the plurality of network port meansports and the source MAC address.

40. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 24, wherein the packet further comprises a destination MAC address, and

wherein the controller means ~~is further for~~:

~~processing~~ processes the packet according to the destination MAC address when an association between the destination MAC address and a further one of the plurality of network ~~port~~ means ports exists and the association between the destination MAC address and the further one of the plurality of network ~~port~~ means ports has been approved; [[and]]

~~processing~~ processes the packet without regard to the destination MAC address when no association between the destination MAC address and ~~any of the~~ one of the plurality of network ~~port~~ means ports exists; and

~~processing~~ processes the packet without regard to the destination MAC address when the association between the destination MAC address and the further one of the plurality of network ~~port~~ means ports exists but the association between the destination MAC address and the further one of the plurality of network ~~port~~ means ports has not been approved.

41. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 40, wherein, ~~for~~ the controller means causes the further one of the plurality of network ports to transmit the packet when processing the packet according to the destination MAC address, ~~the controller means is further for causing the further one of the network port means to transmit the packet.~~

42. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 40, wherein, ~~for the controller means causes all of the plurality of network ports but the one of the plurality of network ports to transmit the packet when~~ processing the packet without regard to the destination MAC address, ~~the controller means is further for causing all of the network port means but the one of the network port means to transmit the packet.~~

43. (Original) An integrated circuit comprising the apparatus of claim 24.

44. (Original) A network switch comprising the apparatus of claim 24.

45. (Original) The network switch of claim 44, wherein the network switch is an Ethernet network switch.

46. (Currently Amended) The network switch of claim 44, further comprising ~~[[:]] CPU means in communication for~~ communicating with the CPU interface means.

47. (Currently Amended) A method for a switch comprising a plurality of network ports and a central processing unit (CPU) interface, the method comprising:

receiving, on one of the plurality of network ports, a packet comprising a source media access control (MAC) address;

sending, to the CPU interface, a request to approve an association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address when no request to approve the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address has been sent to the CPU interface; and

sending, to the CPU interface, the request ~~to approve the association between the one of the network ports and the source MAC address~~ when an association between the source MAC address and a different one of the plurality of network ports has been approved.

48. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 47, further comprising[[:]] determining whether an association exists between ~~any of the~~ one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address.

49. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 48, wherein the determining of whether an association exists between ~~any of the one of the plurality of network ports~~ and the source MAC address comprises[[:]] searching a forwarding database for the source MAC address.

50. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 47, further comprising[[:]] determining whether no request to approve the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address has been sent to the CPU interface.

51. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 50, wherein the determining of whether no request to approve the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address has been sent to the CPU interface comprises[[:]] determining whether an unapproved association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address exists.

52. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 51, wherein the determining of whether the unapproved association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address exists comprises:

determining whether the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address exists; and

~~when the association between the one of the network ports and the source MAC address exists,~~ determining whether the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address is approved when the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address exists.

53. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 52, wherein the determining of whether the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address exists comprises[[:]] searching a forwarding database for an entry comprising the source MAC address.

54. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 53, wherein the determining of whether the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address is approved comprises[[:]] determining whether an approval flag is set for the entry comprising the source MAC address.

55. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 47, further comprising:

creating an unapproved association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address.

56. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 55, wherein the creating of the unapproved association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address comprises:

creating the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address; and

~~marking~~ indicating the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address as unapproved.

57. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 56, wherein the creating of the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address comprises[[:] creating an entry in a forwarding database, the entry identifying the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address.

58. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 57, wherein the ~~marking~~ indicating of the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address as unapproved comprises[[:] setting an approval flag for the entry.

59. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 58, further comprising:

receiving, from the CPU interface, in response to the request to approve the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address, an approval of the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address; and

clearing the approval flag for the entry.

60. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 58, further comprising:

receiving, from the CPU interface, in response to the request to approve the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address, a disapproval of the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address; and

deleting the entry.

61. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 55, further comprising:

receiving, from the CPU interface, in response to the request to approve the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address, an approval of the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address; and

approving the unapproved association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address.

62. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 55, further comprising:

receiving, from the CPU interface, in response to the request to approve the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address, a disapproval of the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address; and

deleting the unapproved association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address.

63. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 47, wherein the packet further comprises a destination MAC address, and

wherein the method further comprising comprises:

processing the packet according to the destination MAC address when an association between the destination MAC address and a further one of the plurality of network ports exists and the association between the destination MAC address and the further one of the plurality of network ports has been approved; [[and]]

processing the packet without regard to the destination MAC address when no association between the destination MAC address and ~~any of the~~ one of the plurality of network ports exists; and

processing the packet without regard to the destination MAC address when the association between the destination MAC address and the further one of the plurality of network ports exists but the association between the destination MAC address and the further one of the plurality of network ports has not been approved.

64. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 63, wherein the processing of the packet according to the destination MAC address comprises[[:]] transmitting the packet from the further one of the plurality of network ports.

65. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 63, wherein the processing of the packet without regard to the destination MAC address comprises[[:]] transmitting the packet from all of the plurality of network ports but the one of the plurality of network ports.

66. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium that stores a computer program embodying instructions executable by a computer for a switch comprising a plurality of network ports and a central processing unit (CPU) interface, the computer program comprising instructions for:

receiving, on one of the plurality of network ports, a packet comprising a source media access control (MAC) address;

sending, to the CPU interface, a request to approve an association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address when no request to approve the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address has been sent to the CPU interface; and

sending, to the CPU interface, the request ~~to approve the association between the one of the network ports and the source MAC address~~ when an association between the source MAC address and a different one of the plurality of network ports has been approved.

67. (Currently Amended) The computer ~~program~~readable
medium of claim 66, further comprising instructions for[[:]]
determining whether an association exists between ~~any of the one~~
of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address.

68. (Currently Amended) The computer readable
medium~~program~~ of claim 67, wherein the instructions for
determining of whether an association exists between ~~any of~~
~~the one~~ of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC
address comprises[[:]] instructions for searching a forwarding
database for the source MAC address.

69. (Currently Amended) The computer ~~program~~readable
medium of claim 66, further comprising[[:]]instructions for
determining whether no request to approve the association
between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source
MAC address has been sent to the CPU interface.

70. (Currently Amended) The computer ~~program~~-readable medium of claim 69, wherein the instructions for determining of whether no request to approve the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address has been sent to the CPU interface comprises~~[[:]]~~ instructions for determining whether an unapproved association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address exists.

71. (Currently Amended) The computer ~~program~~-readable medium of claim 70, wherein the instructions for determining of whether the unapproved association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address exists comprises instructions for:

determining whether the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address exists; and

determining whether the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address is approved when the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address exists,~~determining whether the association between the one of the network ports and the source MAC address is approved.~~

72. (Currently Amended) The computer ~~program~~-readable medium of claim 71, wherein the instructions for determining of whether the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address exists comprises~~[[:]]~~ instructions for searching a forwarding database for an entry comprising the source MAC address.

73. (Currently Amended) The computer ~~program~~-readable medium of claim 72, wherein the instructions for determining of whether the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address is approved comprises~~[[:]]~~ instructions for determining whether an approval flag is set for the entry comprising the source MAC address.

74. (Currently Amended) The computer ~~program~~-readable medium of claim 66, further comprising~~[[:]]~~ instructions for creating an unapproved association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address.

75. (Currently Amended) The computer ~~program~~-readable medium of claim 74, wherein the instructions for creating of the unapproved association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address comprises instructions for:

creating the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address; and

~~marking~~indicating the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address as unapproved.

76. (Currently Amended) The computer ~~program~~readable medium of claim 75, wherein the instructions for creating of the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address comprises[[:]] instructions for creating an entry in a forwarding database, the entry identifying the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address.

77. (Currently Amended) The computer ~~program~~readable medium of claim 76, wherein the instructions for ~~marking~~ indicating of the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address as unapproved comprises[[:]] instructions for setting an approval flag for the entry.

78. (Currently Amended) The computer ~~program~~readable medium of claim 77, further comprising instructions for:

receiving, from the CPU interface, in response to the request to approve the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address, an approval of the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address; and

clearing the approval flag for the entry.

79. (Currently Amended) The computer ~~program~~-readable medium of claim 77, further comprising instructions for:

receiving, from the CPU interface, in response to the request to approve the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address, a disapproval of the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address; and

deleting the entry.

80. (Currently Amended) The computer ~~program~~-readable medium of claim 74, further comprising instructions for:

receiving, from the CPU interface, in response to the request to approve the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address, an approval of the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address; and

approving the unapproved association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address.

81. (Currently Amended) The computer ~~program~~-readable medium of claim 74, further comprising instructions for:

receiving, from the CPU interface, in response to the request to approve the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address, a disapproval of the association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address; and

deleting the unapproved association between the one of the plurality of network ports and the source MAC address.

82. (Currently Amended) The computer ~~program~~-readable medium of claim 66, wherein the packet further comprises a destination MAC address, and wherein the computer program further ~~comprising~~comprises instructions for:

processing the packet according to the destination MAC address when an association between the destination MAC address and a further one of the plurality of network ports exists and the association between the destination MAC address and the further one of the plurality of network ports has been approved; [[and]]

processing the packet without regard to the destination MAC address when no association between the destination MAC address and ~~any of the~~ one of the plurality of network ports exists; and

processing the packet without regard to the destination MAC address when the association between the destination MAC address and the further one of the plurality of network ports exists but the association between the destination MAC address and the further one of the plurality of network ports has not been approved.

83. (Currently Amended) The computer ~~program~~-readable medium of claim 82, wherein the instructions for processing of the packet according to the destination MAC address comprises~~[[:]]~~ instructions for transmitting the packet from the further one of the plurality of network ports.

84. (Currently Amended) The computer ~~program~~-readable medium of claim 82, wherein the instructions for processing of the packet without regard to the destination MAC address comprises~~[[:]]~~ instructions for transmitting the packet from all of the plurality of network ports but the one of the plurality of network ports.